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OVERVIEW

11. (U) Combating terrorism has long been a priority for the Government of Turkey (GOT). In 2005, Turkey continued its strong support of the coalition in the global war against terror in Afghanistan by commanding the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) from February to August 2005. Turkey has also announced that -- with France -- it plans to co-command ISAF's Kabul Regional Command beginning in mid-2006. Finally, PM Erdogan announced that Turkey will increase its reconstruction assistance ten-fold, to \$100 million.

12. (U) Domestic and transnational terrorist groups have targeted Turks and foreigners, occasionally including USG personnel, for over 40 years. International and domestic terrorist groups operating in Turkey include Marxist-Leninist, radical Islamist, separatist, and pro-Chechen groups. In response to these threats, GOT has developed both strong determination and the capability to fight most domestically-based terrorism. Overall, Turkey continues to support the USG's international, coordinated approach, but that support can be modulated, particularly when Turkish citizens are part of investigations.

13. (U) Turkey's ongoing struggle against the PKK/Kongra-Gel and other Kurdish separatist terrorist groups continues. There were a number of terrorist bombings and attempted bombings in resort areas in western Turkey and Istanbul in 2005, some of which resulted in civilian casualties. A Kurdish separatist group calling itself the Kurdish Freedom Falcons (TAK) claimed responsibility for several of these attacks. There have also been numerous military clashes between Turkish security forces and PKK/Kongra-Gel terrorists this past year: a number of Turkish security officials and terrorists were killed in these clashes.

14. (U) In August 2005, Turkish authorities arrested Luay Sakka, a Syrian national linked to Al Qaida and the Zarqawi organization. Sakka is an important international terrorist: he is linked to the funding of the November 2003 Istanbul bombings and the deaths of U.S. and Coalition Forces in Iraq. Sakka was in Turkey allegedly plotting a terrorist attack on Israeli cruise ships in Turkish ports.

¶5. (U) A criminal trial is underway for dozens of defendants allegedly involved in the November 2003 Istanbul bombings. The lead defendants have admitted to contacts with Al-Qaeda and warned of further attacks if Turkey continues to cooperate with the U.S. and Israel. However, most of the other defendants denied any responsibility for or knowledge of the bombings.

U.S. Designated Terrorist Organizations

¶6. (U) On October 8, 1997, the Secretary of State named the separatist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) and the Marxist-Leninist Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C) terrorist organizations, making them subject to the Anti-terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996. (The PKK changed its name to KADEK in 2002 and to Kongra-Gel in 2003. The USG quickly indicated that this group will continue to be viewed as a terrorist organization regardless of its name.)

Marxist-Leninist

¶7. (U) The main radical-left terror organization, DHKP-C, conducts small-scale operations against Turks and foreigners alike (armed attacks on uniformed police, suicide and other bombings, assassinations). This organization continued to target Turkish and western interests and to organize itself predominantly within Europe. According to government authorities, DHKP-C cooperates with other groups in Europe by providing support, shelter, and arms. They continue to attack U.S. foreign policy in their rhetoric, especially with regard to Iraq, and credible reporting continues to suggest that American interests remain on their target list. In a series of attacks launched prior to the 2004 NATO Summit, DHKP/C and the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (MLKP) placed or attempted to place IEDs on the fringes of the pre-Summit security perimeters to signal their displeasure with political events in Iraq and embarrass the GOT prior to hosting NATO members. A Turkish policeman was seriously injured when one of these IED's planted near the hotel where the U.S. President was to stay was detonated. The TNP suspect the DHKC/P of perpetrating several small scale bombings in Istanbul in 2005.

¶8. (U) The second active far-left terrorist organization is the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (MLKP). MLKP conducts small-scale terrorist operations, usually using IEDs called "sound bombs," within metropolitan areas. MLKP is deemed responsible for a sound bomb attack on the Ankara Turkish American Association in 2004, and for several sound bomb attacks in 2005 as well. Other far-left terrorist organizations that have followings in Turkey include the Turkish Communist Party/Marxist-Leninist (TKP/ML), Turkish Workers' and the Peasants' Liberation Army (TIKKO). TKP/ML and TIKKO primarily operate in the areas of Ordu, Tokat, and Samsun.

Radical Islamist

¶9. (U) The primary radical Islamist terror group of Turkey is Turkish Hizbulah. Known to fight its rivals, namely PKK/Kongra-Gel and rival Islamic groups, Turkish Hizbulah has avoided confrontations with authorities. Turkish Hizbulah has not carried out any major operations in 2005 but, according to state authorities, continues to maintain the capability to conduct operations. Local press has speculated that Hizbulah may have played a role in the November 2003 bombings in Istanbul.

¶10. (U) Other Islamic groups include the Great Eastern Raider's Front (IBDA-C), Federal Islamic State of Anatolia (Kaplancilar), Selam Group, Islamic Movement Organization (IHO), the Jerusalem Warriors, Selefiler, Sofular, and Beyyiat-I El-Imam. Both IBDA-C and Beyyiat-I El-Imam are sympathetic to Al Qaida. IBDA-C claimed to have conducted the Istanbul bombings in November 2003, but Turkish authorities said publicly that the group could not have

conducted the operation without the assistance of a larger organization such as Al Qaida, and IBDA-C has a track record of claiming responsibility for a range of terrorist actions.

Separatist

¶11. (U) PKK/Kongra-Gel is the largest separatist organization in Turkey. The Kurdistan Workers, Party (PKK) was founded in 1978 as a Marxist-Leninist group. In April 2002, the PKK changed its name to Kurdistan Freedom and Democracy Congress (KADEK). In November 2003, the organization's name was changed to the People's Congress of Kurdistan (Kongra-Gel or KGK). Currently, PKK/Kongra-Gel is a leftwing Kurdish separatist terrorist organization that calls for the establishment of a Kurdish entity in parts of Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Syria. A number of other organizations operate with different names under the PKK/Kongra-Gel umbrella.

¶12. (U) The PKK fought a 15-year war against the GOT during which over 30,000 individuals were killed, according to a variety of reports. In February 1999, PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan was captured and later that year the PKK declared a unilateral cease-fire. In the summer of 2004, PKK/Kongra-Gel renounced its self-proclaimed cease-fire and threatened to renew its attacks in southeastern Turkey and Turkey's western cities. (A second, brief ceasefire was declared from August 20 to October 3, 2005.) There were a number of terrorist bombings and attempted bombings in resort areas in western Turkey in the spring of 2005, several of which resulted in civilian casualties. A Kurdish separatist group calling itself the Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK) claimed responsibility for several of these attacks. Throughout 2005 there have been dozens of bombings in western Turkey and particularly in Istanbul in which the TNP have either confirmed or suspect the PKK/Kongra-Gel. There have also been dozens of military clashes between Turkish security forces and PKK/Kongra-Gel terrorists over the past eighteen months. PKK/Kongra-Gel maintains approximately 4,000 to 5,000 armed militants in eastern Turkey and northern Iraq.

Chechens in Turkey

¶13. (U) Although Chechen terrorists did not conduct any major operations in Turkey in 2005, they maintain the capability to do so, according to Turkish officials. Large numbers of Turks, many with roots in the Caucasus, are sympathetic to Chechen ambitions. In April 2002, Mustafa Yilmaz, a Turkish citizen of Chechen origin, seized the Marmara Hotel in Istanbul and held 13 hostages for approximately twenty minutes until he surrendered without incident. This followed an April 22, 2001 seizure of Istanbul's Swiss Hotel by 13 pro-Chechen Turkish citizens who held 150 hostages, including 37 Americans, for approximately 12 hours.

GOT ACTIONS SUPPORTING THE GLOBAL COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM

¶14. (U) Turkey remained a strong and active contributor to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) effort. Turkey commanded the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan for a second time from February to August 2005, contributing 1,500 troops. Turkey has also announced that -- with France -- it plans to co-command ISAF's Kabul Regional Command beginning in mid-2006.

¶15. (U) Turkey permitted the transport to Iraq of humanitarian goods; contributed humanitarian goods and services; and sold vital material such as fuel, food and water to U.S. forces in Iraq. The Turks also allowed Incirlik Air Base to be used as a cargo hub for non-lethal goods going to support OIF and OEF, and for the outbound rotation of U.S. troops returning from Iraq. Turkey was also active in reconstruction efforts, including the provision of electricity to Iraq. Some 70 Turkish citizens have been killed while providing logistical support to Coalition forces or performing reconstruction in Iraq. Turkey has contributed headquarters personnel to the NATO training mission in Iraq;

helped train Iraqi diplomats and political parties; and offered senior military leadership training in Turkey as a further contribution to NATO's Iraq training mission.

¶16. (U) Turkey has also been an active partner on other fronts in the global war on terrorism and international security. Our militaries coordinated assistance to Georgia and Azerbaijan, improving their abilities to protect important energy transportation routes. Turkey continues to be an active participant in NATO Operation Active Endeavour by providing maritime patrol assets and personnel to conduct surveillance, interception and boarding operations against suspected terrorist activities in the Mediterranean. Turkey subscribes to every arms control arrangement it is eligible to join, including the Proliferation Security Initiative. Ankara has been supportive of international efforts to convince Iran to meet its commitments to the IAEA. The Turkish military's Partnership for Peace Training Center provides counter-terrorism and other training to personnel from PFP partner countries. During 2005, the military also established a NATO Center of Excellence for the Defense Against Terrorism that provides more specialized training opportunities for both NATO partner nations and alliance members.

¶17. (U) In compliance with UN Security Resolution 1373, Turkey has ratified all United Nations conventions on combating terrorism. However, Turkey has acted (by Council of Ministers decrees) to freeze the assets only of those terrorist organizations, persons, and entities designated pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 1267 (relating to Taliban and Al-Qaida), because Turkish law does not currently permit it to freeze the assets of other such organizations, persons, and entities without an order from a prosecutor. The initial decree, No. 2001/3483, dated December 22, 2001, has been updated by decrees Nos. 2002/3873, dated March 21, 2002, 2002/4206, dated May 16, 2002, 2002/4896, dated October 1, 2002, and 2002/5426, dated March 28, 2003. In November 2005, the Turkish government proposed legislation to parliament that would explicitly criminalize the financing of terrorism; strengthen the suspicious transaction reporting regime by providing immunity from prosecution to filers of STRs; and restructure MASAK (the Turkish treasury's financial intelligence unit). The law has not been adopted yet.

¶18. (U) Both the U.S. and the EU have offered training to strengthen Turkish investigators, and prosecutors, ability to prosecute financial crimes.

RESPONSE OF THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM

¶19. (U) Parliament in June 2004 adopted legislation closing the State Security Courts (DGM), special courts designed to try cases involving terrorism and other "crimes against the State." Under the legislation, the Government created new specialized heavy penal courts to take on most of the former DGM caseload. The new courts have special powers similar to those of the DGMs. Average trial times run more than a year, and defendants in the specialized courts are usually incarcerated during their trials.

EXTRADITION OF SUSPECTED TERRORISTS

¶20. (U) In 2005, the Republic of Turkey did not seek the extradition of any suspects from the United States on terror-related charges, nor did the United States seek the extradition of such suspects from Turkey. There are no impediments to host government prosecution and/or extradition of suspected terrorists. In several instances where countries in the region have sought rendition/extradition of suspected terrorists located on Turkish territory, the process has proven difficult.

¶21. (U) In the past, Turkey has faced difficulty in extraditing terror-related suspects from European countries. According to government officials, Turkey has requested the extradition of over 200 high level administrators of terrorist organizations since 1991. Sympathy with Kurdish political and cultural aspirations in some European states and allegations of torture by Turkish officials, as well as, Turkey's legal provision for the death penalty have all proved impediments to such extraditions. However, in August 2002, as a part of the European Union reform package, the Turkish Parliament passed a law banning the use of the death penalty. In October 2004, Muhammed Metin Kaplan, the so-called "Caliph of Cologne" who was convicted in German courts for inciting the murder of a rival religious leader, was extradited from Germany to Turkey. In November 2005, a Turkish appeals court overturned Kaplan's June 2005 conviction for treason and plotting to kill all of Turkey's senior leaders by crashing a plane into Ataturk's mausoleum in Ankara during 1998 celebrations in honor of the republic's 75th anniversary. He faces the possibility of a retrial.

RESPONSES OTHER THAN PROSECUTION

¶22. (U) Turks see themselves as among the world's primary victims of terrorism. They cite the long-running terrorist insurgency of the PKK/Kongra-Gel and the worldwide assassination campaign against the Turkish diplomats and their families by Armenian terrorists during the 1970s and 1980s. They have long complained about European countries' harboring terrorists who attack Turkey. The Turkish government and media were quick to respond to the events of September 11. At all levels, there was an outpouring of sympathy and solidarity. There was widespread public sentiment that now others were beginning to experience what Turks had lived with for years. Turkey's pre-9/11 historic cooperation with the U.S. in law enforcement, military and intelligence activities has increased over the last two years. There has been visible support for the security of Americans at our mission's buildings by local police.

¶23. (U) The Turkish stand on terrorism has been somewhat softer in the case of the Chechens. There are cultural and religious ties between Turks and Chechens, and both have had a long-time rivalry with Russia. The media treated the takeovers of a ferryboat in 1999 and a hotel in 2001 in Istanbul more like protests than terrorist attacks.

¶24. (U) The leftist and Islamic fringe press sometimes portrays Chechen rebels, Palestinian suicide bombers, and even Al Qaida members of anti-Iraqi forces as "freedom fighters." Terrorism has long been an interest of academics and writers in Turkey. In recent years, there have been several conferences on the topic. Those organized by institutions of the state have been seen as tools in the fight against terrorism. Privately funded academic programs have focused more on analyzing the impact of terrorism and the root causes of terrorism.

MAJOR COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS BY THE GOT

¶25. (U) The GOT continued its aggressive counterterrorism efforts in 2005. In addition to sharing intelligence information on various groups operating in Turkey, the Turkish National Police (TNP) and the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) conducted an aggressive counterterrorist campaign and detained numerous suspected terrorists in scores of raids, disrupting these groups before terrorist acts could be carried out.

¶26. (U) The GOT continues its active campaign to suppress the PKK/Kongra-Gel; its security operations tempo has been significantly increased in line with the organization, ratcheting up of the conflict. It continues to monitor the organization's political movements in an effort to stem any

potential disturbances.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR TERRORISM

¶127. (U) The GOT consistently and strongly opposes both domestic and international terrorism. Turkey does not view its maintenance of diplomatic or economic/commercial relations with Cuba, Iran, Libya, Sudan, and Syria as constituting support for international terrorism.

SUPPORT STATEMENTS FOR TERRORIST COUNTRIES

¶128. (U) Turkey shares borders with, and has been an historic trading partner of, Syria and Iran. It balances a condemnation of terrorist activities in those countries with the need to access historic trade routes. Public statements against state-supported terrorism are clear. It has security relations aimed principally at PKK/Kongra-Gel terrorists with both Syria and Iran.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN ATTITUDES TOWARDS TERRORISM

¶129. (U) Since the attacks of September 11, the GOT has taken an active role in the worldwide opposition against terrorism. In November 2004, the High Military Council (YAS) announced that the National Security Policy would be re-written to note a shift in defense strategy from one focused on regional threats to a focus on international terrorism, fundamentalist and separatist threats. In May 2004, the European Union placed the PKK and DHKP/C on its list of terrorist groups after an intensive push by the GOT, with U.S. support, for the EU to adopt tougher measures against Turkish terror groups operating in Europe.

USG COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS AND INITIATIVES WITH GOT

¶130. (U) Turkey remains a staunch ally in the war on terrorism. The TNP continues to provide excellent protection of U.S. diplomatic and military facilities throughout Turkey. Similar to their handling of security of high profile events (e.g. the Istanbul NATO Summit) in 2004, security at the World University Games that took place in August 2005 in Izmir was appropriately proactive and without incident.

¶131. (U) Senior U.S. government leaders and officials have continually engaged their Turkish counterparts in an effort to ameliorate the threat PKK/Kongra Gel poses to Turkey. Then-S/CT Coordinator Cofer Black held comprehensive talks with GOT officials in Oct. 2003. That same year the GOT agreed to a limited "reintegration" law to allow some PKK terrorists to return to Turkey, but the law expired with very few returnees recorded. After the PKK/Kongra Gel ceased its unilateral cease fire in June 2004, both Turkish casualties and mounting public pressure on the U.S. to act have increased steadily. The U.S., Turkey, and Iraq held trilateral talks on the issue in January and August 2005; CENTCOM Commander General Abizaid also visited Ankara in January 2005, in part to discuss PKK/Kongra Gel. In September 2005, EUCOM Commander Gen Jones and CENTCOM Deputy Commander Lt. General Smith held talks with TGS counterparts.

Also in the fall of 2005, the U.S. government commenced a comprehensive interagency initiative to assist the GOT in persuading countries in Europe to arrest and prosecute PKK leaders living there.

¶132. (U) As noted above, Turkey is now in the process of modifying its domestic laws to comply with the UN Convention on Suppression of Terrorist Financing, which the GOT adopted in 2002. Turkey needs to align its legal definition of terrorism with international norms; currently terrorism is

defined as attacks against Turkish citizens or the Turkish state.

¶133. (U) Turkey is an active participant in the Department's Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) program. Since 2001, the Turks have participated in 27 ATA courses. In CY 2005, Turkey participated in three courses: WMD Management of Mass Casualty, which was held in Ankara; Advanced Explosive Incident Countermeasures; and Consultation on Maritime/Port Security. As a result of this last consultation, the TNP have developed and begun a training course for their personnel at the ports.

(Information for the Report's classified annex)

¶134. (S) The Turkish Government continued to allow the use of Incirlik Air Base (AB) and Mediterranean Sea ports to support U.S. operations in and out of Afghanistan and Iraq, including:

- Allowed the U.S. to use Incirlik AB to transit cargo hub for nonlethal material for OIF and OEF.
- Authorized the U.S. to use Incirlik AB to transit Taliban and Al-Qaeda detainees from Afghanistan to GTMO; and for the transit of released GTMO detainees back to their country of origin.
- Allowed the U.S. military to station tankers at Incirlik AB to support OIF- and OEF-related refueling missions;
- Allowed U.S. tankers to offload JP-5 at the port of Mersin, the primary entry point for Incirlik jet fuel, and at the port of Iskenderun in support of overland shipments of sustainment fuels to OIF ground forces.
- Contributed KC-135 tankers to support OEF-related operations;
- The Turkish General Staff's Intelligence Directorate (J-2) continued its participating in a bilateral U.S-Turkish "Intelligence Fusion Cell" designed to assist USCENTCOM intelligence gathering against the PKK/Kongra-Gel in northern Iraq. TGS J-2 also responded quickly to U.S. requests for information on possible terrorist locations and some merchant ships of interest.

COOPERATION-INVESTIGATION/PROSECUTION

(Information for the Report's Classified Annex)

¶135. (C) The Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty between the United States and Turkey, which entered into force in January 1981, governs investigative cooperation. The GOT has processed requests for investigative access to evidence under this treaty. However, in some cases the GOT has left requests unanswered for over three years.

COOPERATION-PREVENTION

¶136. (U) The GOT coordinates closely with the USG on anti-terrorist financing initiatives. In response to USG requests to freeze terrorist-related financial assets, the GOT has added to its domestic asset freeze list all names of individuals and firms designated under UNSCR 1267 (names related to financing of Taliban and al-Qaida). The GOT also investigates these names and freezes assets found in Turkey.

COOPERATION DURING PAST FIVE YEARS-PREVENTION

¶137. (U) Overall, in the last five years, the GOT has worked closely with the USG in the apprehension, conviction, and punishment of those responsible for terrorist attacks in

Turkey. GOT response is always immediate and substantial
when alerted to threat or incident involving US interests.
WILSON